



REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
MAJURO, MARSHALL ISLANDS

For immediate release, 19 July 2015
Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands

MARSHALL ISLANDS FIRST SMALL ISLAND COUNTRY TO SET CLEAR AND ROBUST CLIMATE TARGET FOR 2025

The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) today became the first small island state to set a new emissions reduction target for 2025, and the first developing country to adopt the simpler and more robust absolute economy-wide target that is usually expected of industrialized countries.

RMI's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution – or 'INDC' – includes a commitment to reduce emissions by 32% below 2010 levels by 2025, and also includes an indicative target to further reduce emissions to 45% below 2010 levels by 2030. This is in line with RMI's longer-term vision to move towards net zero emissions by 2050, or earlier if possible.

The preference for a 2025 target is consistent with calls by the US, Brazil and the world's most vulnerable countries for shorter five-year commitments to avoid locking in insufficient ambition all the way to 2030, some 15 years away. It will strengthen calls from a growing majority that all countries must come back to the table by 2020 to see if stronger action is possible, particularly as renewable energy and other low-carbon technology becomes cheaper and more efficient.

As RMI once [again mops up the damage](#) after the latest in a series of climate disasters to hit the low-lying atoll nation, the new targets reaffirm RMI's commitment to strong climate leadership in the Pacific region, as recognized by the [Majuro Declaration for Climate Leadership](#) adopted in the country when it hosted Pacific Island Leaders in September 2013. RMI's new target builds on those previous efforts, but are now based on the more rigorous data collected during the preparation of RMI's greenhouse gas inventory for 2010, which is soon to be submitted to the UNFCCC in the country's 'Second National Communication'.

Speaking on the release of the INDC, the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Christopher J. Loeak, said:

“I am proud that, despite the climate disasters hitting our shores with increasing regularity, we remain committed to showing the way in the transition to a low-carbon economy. We may be small, but we exemplify the new reality that going low carbon is in everyone's interests. It improves our economy, our security, our health and our prosperity, particularly in the Pacific and more broadly in the developing world.”

“With these ambitious targets, we are on track to nearly halve our emissions between 2010 and 2030, en route to becoming emissions-free by the middle of the century. The science says this is what's required globally. We have now joined the United States, the European

Union, Ethiopia and others in setting a long-term decarbonization strategy. When added together in Paris, these strategies will stamp fossil fuels with an expiry date.”

“Having an absolute economy-wide target means no-one has to look into a crystal ball to understand what it means for how much CO₂ goes into the atmosphere. Unlike ‘below business-as-usual’ and ‘GDP intensity’ targets, our numbers don’t rely on unknown variables like size of population and future economic growth. This is the simplest and most robust type of target that a country can adopt. It says ‘we mean business’, and we’re not continuing with ‘business as usual’.”

Speaking from Paris, where he is preparing to attend an informal Ministerial meeting on the negotiations convened by French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, RMI Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tony de Brum, added:

“Leadership requires vision. Despite the costs of climate change spiraling out of control, we have once again shot for the upper end of what’s possible with our limited resources and international support.”

“Since the 2008 oil price shock, the Marshall Islands has embarked on one the world’s most aggressive rollouts of renewables and energy efficiency measures. This helped us to peak our emissions in 2009, just before Copenhagen. But going forward, we’ll need to go harder, upscaling not only on solar, but also biofuels and wind, as well as the potential use of transformational technology, such as Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion. If we can show OTEC to work in our waters, it could change the global energy landscape altogether, delivering clean, green power to big coastal cities all over the world.”

“With most of the big emitters’ targets now on the table, everyone knows we are falling well short. This is not something that can be ignored, nor swept away by political expediency. There can be no more excuses for delay or for low-balling ambition on the false premise that coal and other dirty fuels somehow increase prosperity. Exactly the opposite is true. Our message is simple: if one of the world’s smallest, poorest and most geographically isolated countries can do it, so can you.”

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